

## **BI 334W THE PSALMS**

Instructor: Beth E. Elness-Hanson

Area elective for final year students

Open to: Second and final year students

2 credits; letter grade or credit/no-credit

An introduction to the study of the Psalms and their theology. Detailed exegesis of selected Psalms in Hebrew for those with the Hebrew language skills. English exegesis options are also available.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

1. To help the student gain increased facility in the use of the tools necessary for the exegesis of Hebrew Bible poetic literature, with expansion of biblical Hebrew poetic analysis.
2. To help the student understand the Psalms and their theology in the light of their cultural and liturgical setting in Hebrew Bible times and to relate their message to Christian life and faith today.
3. To help the student wrestle theologically with calls for vengeance and presentations of God as oppressor found in the psalms.
4. To examine the use of recasting of traditions in the psalms and the use of the psalms in the New Testament.

### **PROCEDURE:**

The initial class sessions will deal with introductory issues, methodology, and the theology of the Psalms in general.

The rest of the course will be spent in the detailed exegesis of selected Psalms representative of the different literary types found in the Psalter.

### **EVALUATION:**

Each student will be evaluated on the basis of:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| A. Class participation and presentations .....        | 10% |
| B. Book chapter review .....                          | 10% |
| C. Book review .....                                  | 20% |
| D. Exegetical project .....                           | 50% |
| E. Creative interpretation on exegetical project..... | 10% |

The exegetical text is selected according to the student's interest.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

Required:

- The Bible in a standard more "formal" translation (~84 pages)
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Spirituality of the Psalms*. Abridged Edition. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2001 (76 pages).
- deClaissé-Walford, Nancy. *Introduction to the Psalms: A Song from Ancient Israel*. Danvers, MA: Chalice, 2004 (192 pages).
- Jacobson, Rolf, ed. *Soundings in the Theology of Psalms: Perspectives and Methods in Contemporary Scholarship* (Theology and the Sciences). Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2010 (224 pages).
- Other assigned articles and available in either open source or DTL.